Mr. Bosbyschell's Confession.

It was very late Saturday night when Mr. Bosbyschell came home. It was very nearly Sunday morning. He did not come in the usual way. He did not open the gate. He climbed over it, although there was no apparent reason why he should get into the yard in that way. And he climbed on the gate with an affectation of great stealth and with a reality of great difficulty.

He slammed himself up against the gate with great violence and a terrific crash, and closed one eye and looked around him at the midnight solitude and said "—ah!" several times.

Then he clambered to the top of the gate and kicked against it with his feet as he scrambled up and made such a racket that every dog on South Hill woke up and began calling all the other dogs' names, while Mr. Bosbyschell balancing himself on the top of the gate, rattled it so furiously, in his unsteady violence, the dogs could scarcely hear each other, and Mr. B. repeatedly put one hand to his mouth, and said "—sh!" in the same warning tones, and winked, in a very laborious and uncertain manner, in the several and general directions of the noisy and invisible dogs, to indicate that he was doing something powerful sly, and wanted to keep most awful shady about it. Then he began to climb over and let himself down on the inside of the gate.

Now the gate was unfastened, and when Mr. Bosbyschell transferred his weight to the inside, it flew wide open, banged itself up against the fence, and Mr. Bosbyschell, as he let himself down on the sidewalk, on the outside of the fence, distorted his face into such an expression of malignant and fiendish cunning as would have silenced every dog on the hill, could they have seen it. Then with stealthy steps he tiptoed across the street in a zigzag manner, holding a finger on his lips to impress the sleeping world and the voiceless night around him with silence, while he pursued his cautious way, as he supposed to his own front door.

His amazement, when he found another row of shade-trees, another fence and another closed gate confronting him, was simply colossal. He stared until his eyes ached, then declaring that it was "pef'ly increpemsivel," by which he was understood to convey the idea that it was "perfectly incomprehensible," he retraced his steps and after staring very hard at his open gate, plunged through it, bulged up the front steps, fell against the front door, and while he struggled to gain an erect posture, said "—sh!" at warning intervals.

Some one, a figure arrayed in white, with frills around its head and blood in its eye, let him in, and he lunged with easy grace into the first chair that went past him, after he had made several vain attempts to seat himself on the piano. The reproachful figure of Mrs. Bosbyschell regarded him with calm severity, and her icy silence made him feel uncomfortable.

"Moggareck," he said thickly, but with grave earnestness, "Moggareck," (Mrs. Bosbyschell's front name is Margaret) "I've—hic—I've gotta—gotta quickened coshielsce."

"At what?" asked Mrs. Bosbyschell, in calm disdain.

"A quicked coshience," repeated Mr. Bosbyschell. "A quicked coshience. A—hic—I've got something ommy min', Maggart. I've gotta—hic—coffessiol—codfession—gottacoffession t'make."

"You can make it in the morning," she said, imperiously. "I am going to bed. You may sleep where you please, or rather, where you can."

"Naw," protested Mr. Bosbyschell, with much vehemence, "can't—cantwait; hic; cantgot'sleep 'ith th'sload ommy—ommy mind. Got coffession t'make, an' mus'—mus' make it. Done suthin', Moggart, hic—been—been a—beena load ommy mind long time. Been—hic—carryin' guilty secret 'round 'ith me too long. Quicked coshience won' gimme—won'gimmy nope—hic—no peace. Mus' tell you. Sumpin', Mogert, sumpin' 'll s'prise you. I've—"

"Mercy on me man!" exclaimed Mrs. Bosbyschell, startled from her composure, "what *have* you been doing? Tell me quick, tell me, for heaven's sake!"

"Moggart," said Mr. Bosbyschell, "it's cumthin' ye nev—hic—never suspect—suspected. It'll mos' kill ye. Hic! S'pec' it'll n—nigh drive ye crazy. 'Sawful t' think 'bout it, Y'—y'wouldn' b'lieve it of me, Margart, y'—ye wouldn'. I've been—"

"Speak!" shrieked the almost frantic woman, "I'm wild with suspense! Speak, tell me all, quick! Oh, I could tear her eyes out! Tell me, you brute, what is her name? Who is she?"

"Wh—wh—hic! Who'sh who!" demanded Mr. Bosbyschell, in blank amazement.

"The woman, you wretch!" screamed his wife; "who is the woman?"

"Oh, shaw, Moggart," ejaculated Mr. Bosbyschell. "tain' th—hic—that. Wussen that. 'Smore dreadful. Hic. 'Smore crushin'. You—hic, y'won't hardly b'lieve it—hic—w'en tell ye. Moggart—"

"Speak!" wailed the anxious woman, wringing her hands, "speak; let me know the worst! What have you been doing?"

"Margart," said Mr. Bosbyschell, solemnly, and with the air of a man upon whom a quickened conscience had wrought its perfect work, "Margart," he said, nerving himself for the shock of confession, "Margart, I've—hic—I've been drinking!"

There was a dull, heavy sound, as the ottoman caromed on Mr. Bosbyschell's head, and he looked out from his recumbent posture under the piano just in time to see a form robed in snowy white speed swiftly up the hall stairs with an expression of disgust on its marble features. And out in the azure skies the eternal stairs looked down at the swinging gate, and peeped in at the sleeping figure under the piano and winked at the drowsy hall lamp that had smelled so much whisky it had burned itself out in a whisky fit, and the sad, voiceless spirit of the night sat on the front fence and brooded with a tender mystery over the devious ways of wayward, fallen man.

Wishing for Money.

"I wish I had his money," said a young, hearty-looking man, as a millionaire passed him in the street. And so has wished many a youth before him, who devotes so much time to wishing, but too little to working. But never does one of these draw a comparison between their several fortunes. The rich man's money looms up like a balloon before them, hiding uncounted cares and anxieties, from which they are free; keeping out of sight those bodily ills that luxury breeds, and all the mental horrors of *ennui* and satiety, and the fear of death that wealth fosters, the jealousy of life and love from which it is inseparable.

Let none wish for unearned gold. The sweat by which it is gathered is the only sweat by which it is preserved for enjoyment. Wish for no man's money. The health, strength, freshness, and sweet sleep of youth are yours. Young love by day and night encircles you. Hearts unsoiled by the deep sin of covetousness beat fondly with your own. None, ghoul-like, listen for the death-tick in your chamber. Your shoes have value in men's eyes only when you tread in them. The smiles no wealth can purchase greet you—living; and tears that rarely drop on rosewood coffins will fall from pitying eyes upon you—dying. You have enough to eat, to drink, to wear; then you have all the rich man has. What though he fares more sumptuously? He shortens life, increases pains and aches, impairs his health thereby. What if his raiment be more costly? God loves him none the more, and man's respect in such regard comes ever mingled with his envy. Nature is yours in all her glory; her ever-varying and forever-beautiful face smiles peace upon you. Her hills and valleys, fields and flowers, rocks and streams, and holy places, know no desecration in the step of poverty, but welcome ever to their wealth of beauty rich and poor alike.

The Man with a Bible kind of a Name.

The cars moved out of the Grand Central Depot a few mornings ago with the usual crowd of humanity on board. In the smoking-car were three farmers from somewhere along the Sound, who were now going home. All were smoking vigorously, and each was telling the others his particular city experiences, whenever he could get in a word, which he often failed to do.

One of the party was describing his good luck on some other occasion when he visited a sleight-of-hand performance, when he was treated to some wonderful Bourbon whisky. This time he had visited a similar exhibition, but the performance was not equal to his expectations. The bottle-trick was wanting.

"It was finer than silk, that whisky," he told his friends, "and I wanted more. Brandy, too, and all kinds you could mention—all out of same bottle—that was what beat me."

"Oh, most all of 'em can do that," said another, "but who was this chap you went to see last night? What was his name?"

"I disremember it now; but it was a sort of a Bible name."

During this conversation, the conductor having collected his fares, had come into the car with a gentleman and took the seat next to the rural party. The conductor and his friend heard the conversation, and smiled significantly at each other when lighting their cigars. It meant fun for somebody. The farmer, meantime, went on with his account of what he saw the night before. The tricks were new and strange, but nothing in his estimation was equal to the bottle-trick or the Bourbon produced in other days.

The conductor's friend now interrupted him.

"My friend," said he, "do you think you would be able to recognize that brand of Bourbon if you were to taste it again? I have been told that there is great deceit in liquors, so that a man really does not know whether he gets the same thing twice or not."

"Great Andrew Jackson! do I think I'd know it next time? Of course I do. You must think I can't trust my own mouth. Why, one little snifter of that whisky would keep a good taste in a man's mouth for a week. You'd say the same if you'd had a taste of it."

"It must have been good," said the conductor's friend, drawing a suspicious looking bottle from his pocket; "but, now, my friend, let me offer you something that is said by good judges to be fine—hard to beat. I am not a judge myself."

Pouring out a little, he passed it over to the farmer. It was drank with evident pleasure.

"That's like it—it might be the same sort. That's good."

Then the farmer at once entered into conversation with the owner of the bottle. There was excellent fishing almost anywhere along the Sound, and if the gentleman would only come out for a day's sport, he would find friends to assist; and, finally, the owner of a bottle of such whisky as that would always be welcomed in his neighborhood. This whisky was excellent; but still he calculated there was none in the country now equal to what he had once tasted from a magician's bottle.

The cigars were now smoked out, and the conductor and his friend rose to go into another car.

"Let me offer you another taste from my bottle before I go," said the gentleman. "Perhaps your friends will try it also?"

They did each one try it, the spokesman of the party being the last. It must have been good, for they seemed well pleased, all but the last named man; he opened his mouth in speechless misery. Another one then asked the gentleman his name.

"Great Cæsar!" gasped the victim of misplaced confidence; "why that last set me all on fire! What did he say his name was, John?—hell or something? He's the very chap I went to see last night. I knew he had a Bible kind of a name, and that whisky just matches it—red hot!"

Amid the roars of the smokers the conductor's friend then bowed himself out.

Threshing Floors in Spain.

The threshing floors is an institution of ancient times, and is still formed and used in Spain as in the days of the Patriarchs. A circle some thirty feet in diameter is drawn by the primative means of a stick and string, and the circumference bordered with goodly stones. Over the interior area, first well broken up by the pick, clay is thickly spread and leveled, and water is turned over the whole surface, which is then beaten smooth by heavy mallets and left to dry in the sun. These floors, which are often the scenes of great festivity, of moonlight dances and quiet hours of chat after the day's labor is done, and the tired workmen throw themselves down on the piled-up sheafs to smoke their cigarettes, present, also at times of wheat-threshing as characteristic scenes as any, perhaps, to be witnessed among these primitive husbandmen. First, the harvest is brought in on old-fashioned lumber-vehicles, and arranged in a huge circle, several rows deep and as high as a man's head, around the area. Then, beginning at the center, circle upon circle of sheaves are laid, the one lapping slightly inward and over the other, till the whole area shows one mass of golden spray, fixed firmly and carefully by the threshers, and offering a splendid surface for the plowing horses that are soon to tread it out. Down they come, a fine loose herd of mares, their long tails switching in the wind, and driven on by boys and men, who shout and throw their long staffs here and there, as some member of the herd strays from the ranks or stops to crop the grass by the wayside. Seven abreast, these horses are attached to a wooden drag with a smooth rounded bottom about two and a half feet square. Upon this uncertain platform the driver leaps and turns his horses heads towards the circumference of the area. The beasts plunge in, and at a long flourish and loud crack of the whip away they go. Amid the flying wheat straw they keep on their course around and around—the lithe, tall form of the driver, bending back to keep his balance, with picturesque costume, his broad sombrero, his swarthy face sparkling with excitement, and his wild, sharp cries to his horses, making an animated and peculiar spectacle, well worth looking at.

Odds and Ends.

You cannot always tell by the way a person dresses whether his pew is paid for.—[*Danbury News.*

The Turks took a liking to the silent Grant, because he said so little that they couldn't understand.—[*Lowell Courier.*

A certain little damsel, being aggravated beyond endurance by her big brother, fell down upon her knees and cried: "Oh Lord! bless my brother Tom. He lies, he steals, he swears. All boys do; us girls don't. Amen."

It is proposed that the Senate meet only once every two hundred years, and then remain in session only twenty-four hours. The object of this bill is to give Senator Sharon a chance to spend a portion of his time in the Senate Chamber.—[*Burlington Hawkeye.*

Did not Charles Lever hint at the coming invention of the phonograph when he said of one of his characters in the polar region that the words were frozen as they fell from his lips until at last he was up to his knees in his own eloquence?—[*Turner's Falls Reporter.*

One of the meanest slanders afloat is that which charges that one of our clergymen swore an oath the other night. The circumstances are simply these: He went into the house, and attempted to make his way in the dark through the sitting-room to the pantry to deposit a bunch of rhubarb presented him by a parishioner, forgetting that house-cleaning had commenced. The wretched girl had left a pail of soft soap near the door, over which he accidently stumbled. Making a herculean effort to save himself he grabbed for something with both hands, and as he alighted firmly on his stomach pulled down on top of him a table full of crockery. Rising promptly to his feet he made a pitch for the match safe, but happening to plant his foot in a puddle of the soft soap he promptly sat down in a tub of preserved fruits. His poor tired wife, who had retired early, was roused from her slumbers, and thinking that burglars were abroad, shrieked for help, to which the hired girl responded, rushing into the room and tumbling headlong over the man in the washtub. These are the naked facts in the case, and that is all there is of it. Our good friend did not say a word that could be constructed into profanity. He simply sat firmly and quietly among the preserves until a light was struck, and then mildly inquired: "How much longer, dear, does house-cleaning last."—[*Ithaca Journal.*

The Chicago Glide on Rollers.

"Thought I'd just try 'em, yer know," he said as he buckled away at a pair of skates in the rink yesterday afternoon. "Think, maybe, I might be able to skate, yer know." And he threw into his tone the *nonchalance* of him who seeketh to play green and lead a sucker into a game of billiards. Then he stood up, and surely he was beautiful to look upon. Such delicate softness of creamy tint in that exquisitely cut shirt-front, from which a gem of Alaska's famous mine flashed brilliantly; such an aureate log-chain festooning his vest from buttonhole to pocket; and, on! just such a darling little low-crowned, mashed-in, lavender felt hat! Then to see him move off in that graceful glide, so calmly elegant, so easily beautiful! People stopped their warm work to look at him. He seemed to feel their admiring eyes gloating on his grace, for he changed his step into all the intricacies of roller-skating. He had reached the far end of the great hall, and now he came moving backward, his feet sailing in artistic sinuosity. Every eye was on him—every beauty-worshipping eye of all that great crowd.

There stands in the hall a large fountain, with a great basin filled with muddy water, and possessing a very low rim. The Chicagoan was moving backward; he thought not of that fountain—he only increased his speed. Before a voice could be raised to save so much of tailor's loveliness his heels had struck the fatal rim—his arms flew out in a wild grasp on ether—he cried out—and the muddy waters were moved.

They fished that young man out, and they tried to detain him to hear their expressions of sympathy; but he would not stay. Dripping from every shred, he hastened away, leaving a few hundred people convulsed with amusement over the idiosyncrasies of the Chicago glide.

The Richmond Battle-Fields.

The battle-fields around Richmond are quiet meadows now, reclaimed by nature, with few signs of the days of "blood and iron." At Cold Harbor, Fair Oaks, Seven Pines, and Malvern Hill one sees little of the terrible scenes enacted there twelve and fifteen years ago. In the woods and on the hillsides and river bluffs in the Peninsula, where no attempt has been made to cultivate the land, sloping earthworks are still to be seen; but elsewhere the entrenchments have been leveled. Below Petersburg there are few traces even of such formidable fortifications as Steadman's, Hell and Damnation. The Crater and the fields around it are owned by Mr. Griffith, who was born close by, and was in Petersburg when the mine was fired. He has built a house near the Crater, and now has his father's farm under excellent cultivation. The Crater itself has been left almost untouched, and a thick underbrush of peach trees and sprouts has sprung up from the pits thrown away by the soldiers during the siege. The ravine where the dead lay in great heaps on that terrible morning has been brought under the plow year after year, until now only a slight depression in the field can be pointed out. The visitor has to pay twenty-five cents for a glimpse of the Crater and the interior of a shed stocked with battle relics.